

Massive Quake Shakes Mexico

A major earthquake of magnitude 7.1 struck central Mexico on Tuesday, killing at least 42 people and trapping more in the at least 27 buildings that had collapsed or caught fire, officials said.

A civil protection official said at least two deaths occurred in the state of Puebla near Mexico City. Media reported at least five deaths in the state, but that figure could not immediately be confirmed.

The governor of the State of Mexico, Alfredo Del Mazo, reported two more deaths.

"People are really scared right now," said dentist Claudia Meneses who was in her clinic in Mexico City's Lindavista neighborhood when the earthquake struck mid-afternoon. "We're going to go to a building that fell to see if we can help."

Earthquakes of magnitude 7 or above are regarded as major and are capable of causing widespread heavy damage.

Mexico City Mayor Miguel Angel Mancera said there were no deaths reported in the capital so far, but at least 20 buildings were damaged.

Television images showed a multi-story building in the capital with a middle floor collapsed as sirens blared and first responders rushed to the scene. Other video showed the side of a government building shearing off and falling into the street as bystanders screamed.

U.S. President Donald Trump said on Twitter: "God bless the people of Mexico City. We are with you and will be there for you."

In Cuernavaca, a city south of Mexico City, there were unconfirmed reports on local radio of people trapped beneath

collapsed buildings.

Mexican TV and social media showed cars crushed by debris. Many people fled into the streets, and electricity and phone lines were down in parts of the capital.

"We got out really fast, leaving everything as it was and just left," said Rosaura Suarez, as she stood with a crowd on the street.

The quake hit only hours after many people participated in earthquake drills around the nation on the anniversary of a devastating quake that killed thousands in Mexico City in 1985.

Many people were also still shaken from another quake on Sept. 7, a powerful 8.1 temblor in southern Mexico that killed at least 98 people.

The epicenter of Tuesday's quake was located in the central state of Puebla, the U.S. Geological Survey said.

President Enrique Pena was on a flight on Tuesday to the state of Oaxaca, one of the hardest hit areas by the previous quake, and said via his Twitter account that he was immediately returning to attend to the quake in Mexico City.